DISCUSSION GUIDE

JUST TRANSITION AS AN EMERGING MOVEMENT

The purpose of this discussion guide is to facilitate thoughtful discussion around the topics introduced in this Indigenous Forum presentation video. The discussion guide can be adapted for use in the classroom as well as salon-style gatherings.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| INFORMATION PAGE                          | 2 |
| Description of Video                   | 2 |
| Keyword Definitions                    | 2 |
| Links                                  | 2 |
| INTRODUCTION AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS   | 3 |
| VIDEO GUIDE                            | 4 |
| TRANSCRIPT                             | 5 |

This video is a presentation of the 2018 Indigenous Forum, organized by the Bioneers Indigeneity Program and featured annually at the Bioneers Conference. Indigeneity is a Native-led Program within Bioneers/Collective Heritage Institute that promotes indigenous knowledge and approaches to solve the earth’s most pressing environmental and social issues through respectful dialogue. Since 1990, Bioneers has acted as a fertile hub of social and scientific innovators with practical and visionary solutions for the world’s most pressing environmental and social challenges.
INFORMATION PAGE

JUST TRANSITION AS AN EMERGING MOVEMENT

DESCRIPTION OF VIDEO

A “just transition” means fostering healthy, renewable economies and communities as we move away from fossil fuel dependence and extractive industries. The ‘Just Transition’ movement began

Learn from Indigenous women leaders who are leading their communities away from fossil fuel dependence and how Indigenous Peoples as a whole are helping to create a just transition.

Featuring:

Melina Laboucan Massimo (Lubicon Cree First Nation) David Suzuki Foundation Research Fellow
AlexAnna Salmon (Yup’ik) Village Council President Igiugig and Pebble Advisory Committee, Bristol Bay Native Corporation
Eriel Deranger (Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation) Executive Director of Indigenous Climate Action

KEYWORDS

UPTERRLAINARLUTA - a Yup’ik concept that translates to, “the way in which we are always getting ready.” It is the idea that one must constantly think forward and prepare for what is coming, in this life and beyond it.

RENEWABLE ENERGY - Also called “clean energy”, refers to energy generated from sources that are naturally replenished on a human timescale, including sunlight, wind, rain, tides, waves, and geothermal.

JUST TRANSITION - A process to transition from fossil-fuel dependent economies and lifestyles towards renewable energy-based economies that consider all aspects of human well-being.

SELF-DETERMINATION - the idea that tribes can self-govern and make decisions for themselves issues and matters that affect their own tribal citizens. Self-determination was upheld by (but goes beyond) the 1975 US Indian Self-Determination and Education Act.

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE - also sometimes referred to as traditional wisdom or Indigenous science, is the knowledge developed over generations of living in place through observing the local environment and gaining knowledge and solutions through experimentation.

LINKS

Bioneers.org | Indigenousclimateaction.com
Lubiconsolar.ca | igiugig.com
INTRODUCTION AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

WHAT IS A JUST TRANSITION?

A “just transition” means fostering healthy, renewable economies and communities as we move away from fossil fuel dependence and extractive industries. The ‘Just Transition’ movement began as a way to help workers in the fossil fuel, agriculture and forestry industries to transition to more sustainable jobs. This involves training for workers to learn new technologies and new ways of doing their jobs that takes up less of the planet’s resources, and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

AN INDIGEOUS-LED JUST TRANSITION

Indigenous Peoples have been disproportionately affected by climate change and its impacts. Their traditional territories have been destroyed through extraction industries, including drilling for oil, mining for minerals, and cutting forests for timber. They have also experienced some of the worst effects of climate change, including droughts, sea level rise, and extreme weather events. Indigenous Peoples are also leading the way in a ‘just transition’ by looking to innovative solutions guided through cultural values for self-reliance, maintaining a healthy relationship with the planet, and caring for others.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What would a ‘Just Transition’ look like in your community?
2. What did Eriel mean when she talked about a ‘Just Transition’ (2:47 - 3:07) as building communities that are “sustainable beyond just energy”?
3. Why are Indigenous Peoples uniquely positioned to lead a ‘Just Transition’?
# VIDEO GUIDE

This guide provides a roadmap to various ideas, keywords and concepts to support video navigation.

## JUST TRANSITION AS AN EMERGING MOVEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Idea, Keyword or Concept</th>
<th>Time Stamp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yup’ik word “always getting ready”</td>
<td>00:50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Determination</td>
<td>2:05, 7:45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Just Transition Movement</td>
<td>2:18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tar Sands</td>
<td>3:35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Indigenous-Led Just Transition</td>
<td>4:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Knowledge</td>
<td>4:55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place-Based Solutions</td>
<td>5:55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Land</td>
<td>6:19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Well-Being</td>
<td>6:47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TRANSCRIPT

JUST TRANSITION AS AN EMERGING MOVEMENT
A 2018 Bioneers Indigenous Forum Presentation

ALEXANNA: There's a Yup'ik word for that that's 10,000 years old, and it's called Upterrlainarluta, “the way in which we are always getting ready.” We're getting ready for the seasons, there might be a change in your caribou herd or the salmon run isn't running right, something is going on that's threatening your security or your survival, and you must be thinking forward to how do we adjust for that, what moves are we going to make, and how are we going to mobilize as a community behind this.

So, for me, just transition, we have a word for it, and from our perspective it means how do we mobilize our community, which has become so dependent on fossil fuels? We pay about $7.79 a gallon of heating fuel, and if you run a business, you're paying a dollar a kilowatt hour for electricity. And our state of Alaska is 90% - operating budget – is based off of the price of fuel, which plummeted. So if the state couldn't afford these power cost equalization programs, my people wouldn't be able to keep our lights on. So we knew far ahead of time that we ourselves need to transition away from this as a source of energy.

For us, from an Indigenous perspective, it means coming together as a community and asking everyone: What is the best way to self-determine our own path forward? And then finding allies along the way, but it being our plan.

ERIEL: The just transition movement was really sort of based on this premise of transitioning workers, making sure that folks—if there was a transition from one energy sort of power play of let's say, coal or gas or oil, and we are moving to more renewables like wind and solar, that those people would be able to transition and that they would be able to transition easily and they wouldn't have a burden economically. But just transition is morphing into much more than just about jobs. It's about access— access to decision making, access to sovereignty and control, and determination of how energy projects are built or how those—the plans are even laid out for how communities can build, communities that are sustainable beyond just energy. It's more than just about these ideas around changing from one energy source to another, but rather about how we do create just communities that have access to clean, healthy air, water, and land. And, ultimately for our communities, it's really about how we can have fair access and recognition of our lands and territories as our lands and territories that are critical to our cultural survival.

MELINA: Coming from the tar sands, I think a lot of what our communities have seen are impacts in terms of environmental degradation, impacts in terms of being the first to experience—also climate change being that north. And I think one of the things for me when realizing—I think just transition here in the US originally started out as transitioning workers, and so transitioning our workers, which, yeah, in the tar sands, they also need to be transitioned. But I think when I started fundraising for my first solar project, I realized actually if I'm not actually the one that's implementing solar in my community, it's actually not going to happen.

We have 1200 small to medium scale Indigenous-led projects across Canada, and we have 150 large scale renewable energy projects across Canada. So that's what a just transition means to me, is that it's led by Indigenous communities for communities implementing in our communities, being active participants and not yet again passive participants in what we call energy—our energy democracy or energy literacy, that we're actually determining our future, what our future looks like. And for me, being from the tar sands, just transition means actually us determining that we want renewable energy and solar in the sunniest province of Canada as opposed to yet again more resource extraction.
ERIEL: For North American Indigenous folks, our culture, our values, our knowledge was demonized for centuries, and it was devalued by white society. And systems of white supremacy and colonialism and capitalism really worked to try and make us feel as though our knowledge systems were not valuable.

And so part of just transition is not just transitioning fuel sources and jobs, but it's about how do we transition our mind frames, our frameworks in how we approach these things to include the diversity of Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous communities into the development of solutions.

When you create top-down, I know, patriarchal, colonialistic approaches to protection and preservation of ecosystems or solutions for communities, they don't work. But when a company came in and was like, “We're going to work with you, and we're going to work with your knowledge in your community,” suddenly you now have a successful project.

MELINA: For me when I go into another person's territory, if I go into another Indigenous person's territory, I do not tell them what to do, I do not—I say whatever way that they do, the way that they do it, is how I will do it here. And I think that's something that colonialism has really wiped out in the sense of respecting the people and the place, and what the governance laws and structures are there for good reason.

6:19 The reason why you see Indigenous Peoples fight to the death to protect land is because land is our relation, land is part of—is who we are. It's inseparable from Indigenous Peoples and our cultures and our languages. [Indigenous land] And I start to see that more and more with non-Indigenous Peoples.

ALEXANNA: So first of all, the transition needs to come from our own communities, because for us it isn't just a transition from one sector. [6:47] For a lot of our Indigenous communities, everything is holistic or we don't have a healthy, well community. If our ultimate goal is to survive and sustain ourselves as a healthy community, there are a lot of components. We need—our education system needs to be decolonized, we have energy security, food security, economic security. We have to take a holistic approach.

So first of all, for the work that I do, we aren't just focusing on energy. There are a lot of facets that we need. Our community had to take a hard look at this, because if our young people kept moving out of our village, we would no longer exist. In Alaska you need to have 10 students enrolled or your school closes and then your village pretty much dies. So our governance sat down with the youth and they said, What do we need to do to make this a place that you want to return to? And so we went from that, and it turned into: We need affordable energy. We need to provide jobs. And we started from that.

7:45 And then from our own plan, our own self-determination plan, which is now 20 years in the making that they've been looking critically at our survival, they said: Who—What kind of partners do we need to bring this forward? And we have, by trial and error, learned what kind of partnerships, especially in energy development, will work.

You can come in and think you have all the answers because you're the greatest engineers on the planet, or you can come in and recognize that you're dealing with a people who have lived here for thousands of years and understand their resources, and design around—and acknowledge that it's a collaborative effort.

ERIEL: We're not just talking about protecting individual communities, we're talking about protecting massive amounts of biodiversity that is critical for the entire planet. And I really think that that needs to be key, that when we talk about just transition strategies that empower and uplift communities to be the ones determining these projects, it's not just about reducing emissions, it's not just about just transition economies or energy sources, it's about protection of the sacred.